

# SCIENCE & EDUCATION Impact

Benefits From the USDA/Land-Grant Partnership

---

## No Ivory Tower Here

Land-Grant students get hands-on, lifelong, real-world education.

*“I’m the guy your parents want you to know,” the professor told the freshman class. “I’ll get you a job.” The professor meant what he said. Land-Grant universities are famous for giving students a solid, practical, science-based classroom experience — plus internships and other real-world experience. So when it’s time to graduate, students are both job-ready and well-educated.*

*Land-Grant universities aren’t just for college students. Because these universities were designed and mandated by law to blend classroom teaching, research, and extension, education is extended beyond the campus, providing lifelong learning to citizens of every state.*

### Payoff

- **Express lane.** Some students start their hands-on learning even before they come to college. In a **North Dakota State** program, high school kids team with upper-level college students from coast to coast to develop skills. In Binghamton, **New York**, a European-inspired apprenticeship program launched by **Cornell** has more than 100 students from seven high schools serving as youth apprentices in 11 firms.
- **Working their way through.** There’s nothing like real-world experience to give you a flying start in the job marketplace. At **Missouri**, 75 percent of agriculture college students have internship experience before they graduate, and senior-level students at **Iowa State** make management decisions on the University’s own 850-acre farm. At **Clemson**, students do research and make recommendations on two actual farms, and at **Oklahoma State**, students and extension clients participate in the “feeder-packer game,” a computerized simulation that teaches real-world marketing tactics. Dairy Fellows at **Cornell** visit and analyze dairy farms and agribusiness operations, and at **Mississippi State**, students from eight states and

**RESEARCH,  
EDUCATION, AND  
EXTENSION  
AT WORK**

# SCIENCE & EDUCATION Impact

Benefits From the USDA/Land-Grant Partnership

two foreign countries took a cotton ginning course that gave them gin management education unavailable anywhere else in the world.

- **Graduation lines, no waiting.** In May 1996, **Purdue** reported that 93 percent of agriculture college graduates were employed within four months of graduation. Placement figures show that the average salary for all recent graduates was up from \$24,800 to \$27,600 over the last year. On average, food processing engineers started at \$38,300, and food science grads started at \$31,900. **Auburn** put its placement rate at 95 percent. At **Missouri**, 60 percent had jobs locked up before they got their diplomas. **Virginia Tech** had a tenfold enrollment increase in its Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences Department and 100 percent job placement in the last 10 years. In **Nebraska**, a state with one of the nation's lowest unemployment rates, 71 percent of grads who get jobs remain in the state after graduation.
- **Moving out, moving up.** Exciting careers often get a "jump start" from scholarships and fellowships. Case in point: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Water Science Fellowship Program, a peer mentoring program that keeps growing and turning out contributors to society. **Michigan State** has been awarded 12 water science fellowships. Five Fellows received doctorates and are now scientists and teachers.
- **Extending the university to you.** You can keep learning from your Land-Grant university for the rest of your life, thanks to university extension programs. Payoffs can be economic, aesthetic, or both. On the economic side, **Nebraska** beef producers estimate they have reduced expenses an average of \$15 a head after taking a beef home study course.
- **We get the bright ones.** Smart, able students are enrolling in colleges of agriculture. In **Maryland**, the SAT scores of incoming freshmen in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources are second only to those of freshmen in the Colleges of Engineering and Computer Sciences. The same holds true for **Missouri**: With ACT scores of 25.9 (20.5 is the state

average), agriculture students' scores are second only to those of students in engineering.

- **The forest for the trees.** Students majoring in forestry at **Texas A&M** and **Utah State** are required to attend summer camps to learn real-life lessons in forestry well before they graduate. **Auburn** students get hands-on training with forestry harvesting equipment at Auburn's Forest Products Training Center.
- **Tapping creativity.** Creative students are everywhere, and Land-Grant professors know how to tap that creativity. **Nebraska** students designed their own biological research projects. One even developed a suturing device to replace surgical staples. Another developed an inexpensive dump cleanup system to protect a community water supply. At **Purdue** and **Missouri**, students made new products from soybeans, including crayons, lip balm, and nail polish.



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

USDA/Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service in cooperation with the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy and the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy.

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202/720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202/720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.